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DIALOGUE WITH A DESIGNER

INTERVIEW WITH LYNNE T. JONES, ASID



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Morrison knows that dreams, reality and inspiration make a house a home. They also know that an interior designer or interior design firm often becomes an intricate part of this process. Design professionals should be committed to creating individualized and functional designs to meet the lifestyles of their clients' families.

Morrison Showrooms work to inspire these ideas and is conveniently located in the heart of Houston. Morrison offers many brands and designs, all exhibited in unique settings with interactive displays. Whether it's appliances, plumbing, hardware or lighting, Morrison has a brand to fit every budget and a style to fit every design. Contact Joann Ontiveros for more details at 713-861-2343.

This month Morrison speaks with Lynne T. Jones, ASID, with Lynne T. Jones Interior Design. She is a native Texan who received her interior design degree from Texas Tech University. She's been a professional designer in the Houston area for more than 30 years and is a past president of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of ASID. (American Society of Interior Designers). Lynne is also active in the Remodelers Council of the Greater

Houston Builders Association.

Morrison: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?

Lynne T. Jones: I've had a passionate appreciation for beautiful furnishings, art and unusual accessories from a very young age. Once I realized that you could have a career putting together beautiful spaces for others, I selected interior design as my degree plan in college.

Morrison: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

Lynne T. Jones: I would say that the internet, HGTV and social media, in general, has turned my profession upside down. Anyone with a few thousand followers on Twitter or is a finalist on a designer "reality" show now considers herself or himself to be an interior designer. Sadly, this just isn't true. Consumers need to beware; always check credentials and experience before hiring a professional designer. The old saying "you get what you pay for" has never been more appropriate.

Morrison: How can an experienced interior designer



help custom home builders or remodeling contractors with their building or remodeling projects?

Lynne T. Jones: The advice and assistance that an experienced designer brings to the table is immeasurable. He or she not only speeds up the selection process with the clients but can also help to avoid costly mistakes. A good builder/designer team is a win-win for everyone involved.

Morrison: What sets you apart from other designers?

Lynne T. Jones: I feel that my strong suit is definitely the relationships that I develop with my clients. I strive to determine their goals and vision for whatever project we are partnering on, and then I work very hard to make that happen. I do not have a signature look and that is by design. I feel that it's very important that my clients' personalities shine through in the finished project.

Morrison: What has been your most challenging project and why?

Lynne T. Jones: The project that probably challenged me the most was the first out-of-state residence that I worked

on over 25 years ago. The project was in Santa Fe, N.M., and while I loved every minute of it, there was a huge learning curve, just figuring out logistics. You learn from every experience, though, and now I've been involved in several long distance projects.

Morrison: How do you begin the materials' selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?

Lynne T. Jones: I like to start by meeting with the clients in their home. This way I can usually get a feel for the way they live and what their style preferences may be. How do they entertain in their home? Do they have children and/or pets? How do they want certain rooms to function? Are there any special needs for anyone (i.e., an aging parent or a child with disabilities) living in the home? We begin a dialog that will help me to understand the priorities for the project.

Morrison: What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?

Lynne T. Jones: I think the biggest mistake may simply be lack of communication between the two. It's imperative that the homeowners express their vision for a project and a builder must be open to new ideas and suggestions, while also explaining realistic cost factors.

Morrison: What is your favorite design style?

Lynne T. Jones: For me personally, I love a mix of classic furnishings, unusual and unexpected accessories, paired with colorful abstract art. If I had to categorize my own style, it would be "eclectic with a twist."

Morrison: What fascinates you and how have you incorporated that into your designs?

Lynne T. Jones: I'm fascinated by vintage pottery pieces from around the world. I seriously love plates, vases, and bowls from a variety of regions. I collect old Imari and Rose Medallion plates, as well as anything Majolica. I also adore the old transfer ware pieces in Black & White, or Brown & White. I admit it, I have a "dish fetish."

Morrison: What would be your recommendation for "what to do first" in a decorating project when working with the builders and/or homeowners?

Lynne T. Jones: I usually suggest that the homeowner

make a wish list of their priorities for the project. And if they have any “inspiration” pictures, that’s always helpful as well. Many of my clients use HOUZZ or Pinterest to get their creative juices flowing; then we discuss.

Morrison: How to you keep yourself up to date with current design trends in the market?

Lynne T. Jones: While I certainly feel that I keep current of the latest trends, I take a lot of pride in advising my clients that it’s best NOT to be “trendy” but rather to make classic selections that are going to stand the test of time. Design trends tend to correlate with fashion trends, and they cycle in and out. For me, I prefer to be the trail blazer and not follow the herd.

Morrison: Speaking about staying current, how to you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?

Lynne T. Jones: As a registered interior designer in the State of Texas and a professional member of ASID, I’m required by law to have at least 12 hours of continuing education courses each year. I usually end up taking far more than the required hours, just for my own benefit. I also attend design conferences, expos and seminars to stay on top of what’s current. Plus, I think I probably have subscriptions to every possible shelter magazine in print today.

Morrison: Any last thoughts, comments?

Lynne T. Jones: I’ve been an interior designer for more than 30 years, and I cannot imagine a more fulfilling or creative profession. I’ve loved working with so many different types of people through the years that sometimes I just have to stop and say to myself, “You’ve been very blessed to have had this opportunity.”

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